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At Villers-La-Montagne.

A SAD AND SENSATIONAL INCIDENT IN THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR.

PROLOGUE.

THE rays of the setting sun fell redly on the Rhine, tinging its blue waters to a sanguinary hue; it glinted on the vines, it glowed on the quaint cottages and hoary old castles, and it threw a sort of halo around Gretchen Kappuch and her lover, Karl Krauf, and turned the threads of her flaxen hair a living gold, and tinged her pale cheeks with a rosy flush, and lingered lovingly in the soft depths of her big blue eyes, suspiciously bright with the smart of unshed tears, which she bravely kept back, lest their falling should pain her beloved; that dear one who was about to cross the frontier to join his regiment, which was one of those investing Metz under Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, to fight for the fatherland, win honor and renown, or a bloody, nameless grave in alien soil.

A fine, strapping girl was Gretchen; broad, well-made and tall, nearly as tall as her lover—and he was by no means a short man—as she leant against his breast and twined her arms round his throat, as though she would fain keep him there forever, in the safe haven of her fond embrace, nor let him go to the seat of war, where ail was carnage, death and desolation.

"I am loth to let thee go," she sighed gently.

"And I to go, my Gretchen," he replied, looking down tenderly at the fair face on his broad breast; "yet when honor calls I must obey."

"Yes, dearest, thou must go; but should'st thou come back, as poor Otto has, it will break my heart,', and she shuddered, for seven days agone her well-loved brother and only relative in the whole wide word had returned to the little vine wreathed cottage on the banks of the Rhine, grievously wounded in the lungs.

At Worth, when the French retreated, Otto Kappuch's regiment had been one of those sent after the flying fugitives, and a stray shot had pierced his breast and tumbled him off his horse in a heap. His comrades had borne him back to the Prussian lines, and after a while, it being seen that for some time he would be totally unfit for active service, he was allowed to return home to see if he could recuit his health in his native village.

"Ah, poor Otto!" ejaculated Krauf. "How is he this day, better?"

"I fear he will never be better," replied the girl sadly. "He has received his death wound."

"Say not so, my beloved," exclaimed the young man, whose grief at leaving the woman he loved was augmented at the thought that soon she might be without a protector, lose the sole relative she possessed, and at the knowledge that he, too, might soon be lying low, riddled by the bullets from a mitrailleuse, or hopelessly by a well-directed shot from the French artillery.

"It is the truth. He will not recover."

"And he knows it?"

"Yes, he knows it. He told me only yesterday that his days were numbered."

"He is ill and weak, and therefore takes a dismal view of his condition," urged Krauf.

"Nay, Karl, thou can'st not say Otto takes a dismal view of things. Merry he always was, and merry he always will be, till death stills his gay laughter, freezes the smile on his lips, dims the light in his eyes."

"Thou art right. He was ever a merry grig."

"And so he is now, though dying."

"Art sure?"

The girl nodded her head. Her heart was too full just then for words, and for a while the lovers stood silent, twined in each other's arms.

"If thou could'st only come with me," he said at last with a deep sigh.

"If, Karl, why not?" she cried joyfully, "I am young, strong, so strong and active; other women have followed their lovers, why not I?"

"My dear one, there is Otto, helpless, dependent on thy care, and if there were not, think'st thou I would let thee come amongst scenes of horror and carnage, such as would turn thee faint and sick?"

"I have strong nerves, Karl, and were it not for Otto, I tell thee candidly that my mind would be to follow thee."

"Thou could'st not, love. Thous must wait patiently until I return to thee here."

"Thou may'st never return," she wailed, the long pent up tears breaking forth, rolling down her cheeks and falling on their clasped hands.

"I will, I will, best beloved; thy love will keep me safe. 'Twill be a talisman to bear me through the fiercest battle unharmed," and he caressed her tenderly.

"If I could think that—" and throwing back her head, she gazed at his well-loved face earnestly.

"Thou mayest. I shall think of thee when the fray is thickest, and pray to God to spare me to return to thee. All will be well, beloved Gretchen."

"But if thou should'st not," she murmured with bated breath, her eyes dilating with fear, her cheeks blanching. "If, instead of returning thou should'st meet death, and find a nameless grave, the spot where thou liest even unknown to me, what then, my Karl, what then?" and her arms tightened convulsively round his throat, and the big eyes grew dim and misty once more.

"Thou must not have these thoughts, my dear one," he chided gently. "Trust in the goodness of our heavenly Father, who will protect me for thy sake. Think of the happy day of my return, and how soon then thou wilt be my bride, of our joy and content in all the years that lie before us. Be brave, love, as a soldier's bride should."

"I will, Karl," she said, dashing away the blinding tears with her strong, sun-browned hands, almost as strong and sinewy as her lover's. "I will be brave for thy sake, and think only of that future which lies before us."

"That is right, that is my brave girl," and soon after, seeing that her endurance was strained to the falling point, after a long, long embrace, when lips meet lips, with all the clinging ardor such a parting as theirs called forth, he gently unclasped her twining hands, and putting her from him, turned and strode away in the ruddy glow of the setting sun.

Gretchen stood looking after him while she could catch a glimpse of his tall figure. When he disappeared from view she uttered a heart-piercing shriek, and flinging herself face downwards on the grass, wept bitter tears of passionate sorrow and regret, writhing in her pain like one in mortal agony. But when the violence of her grief had spent itself, she rose, and drawing a bucketful of crystal clear water from the well, laved her flushed face and swollen eyelids in it, and smoothing her hair and disarranged gown, went into the little vineclad cottage to minister to that twin brother who was so dear to her, next to Karl in her heart and love; and he claimed all her attention in the days that followed, and their few neighbors, knowing how serious were his wounds, marveled not a little one evening two or three weeks later to see the young Uhlan, dressed in his gay uniform, and accoutred as though bound for the seat of war, leave the little cottage and disappear into the gloom of the autumn night.

When Otto Kappuch joined his regiment, one of those investing Metz, his comrades met him with a hearty welcome and expressed surprise at his speedy return; but as they were at Noiseville, and forts Les Bottes and St. Julien were pitching great shells from big guns into the place, and as the whole village was within range of the guns of the latter fort, the work was rather warm, and so little notice was taken of the returned Uhlan, though they were glad enough at that time to welcome to their ranks any returned comrade, even when he proved as changed and odd as Otto Kappuch did. His comrades swore his wounds had changed his whole temperament, and that he was no longer the merry grig who had yelled "Die Wacht am Rhein" in such lusty fashion; but a morose, sullen fellow, who shunned as much as he could the society of his brothers in arms, wrapping himself in a mantle of taciturnity not one could pierce. Still he was not wanting in bravery, never flinching when the bullets whistled and whizzed about his head, and always ready to go on any special dangerous mission. Let it be what it might, Otto Kappuch would always volunteer, and his big blue eyes would flash with a steely gleam as he got himself ready for the expedition, though he knew he might never see another sun rise, never go back to the little vine-clad cottage am Rhein, where he had first seen the light of day.

CHAPTER I.

It was in the autumn of fateful '70—fateful for the French—that I went out to Arlon in Belgium, burning to help the poor fellows wounded in the deadly struggle that was going on between the twp mighty powers. My cousin was chief agent abroad for "The National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War," and was administering the fund, amounting to £400,000, which the British public, with its usual generosity, had subscribed for the purpose. The society's chief depot was then at Arlon, and very busy were all its members, getting off clothing, bedding of all kinds, provisions, medical stores, surgical instruments, brandy, wine and beer. I had my hands full, not an instant to spare, and I was not sorry when one day my cousin, Captain ——, came to me and asked me if I would go down with some fourgons toward Metz, as the army of 200,000 men, under Prince Frederick Charles then investing it, were in want of some medical comforts as well as their unfortunate foes.

Of course I said "Yes," and early in the morning of the following day I climbed up and seated myself beside the driver of one of the fourgons, and off we started, leading the van. The wagons were strong, heavy affairs, each one drawn by a brace of sturdy horses, with a large red cross painted on the side, while we flew the union jack as an ensign.

We had no military escort, inasmuch as it was agreed by the governments that signed the German convention that all persons and things engaged in the service of the sick and wounded should have the protection of neutrality during the time of war. I wore no uniform, only my ordinary clothes, with a brassard, having a red cross upon it round my arm. This badge also bore the stamp of the society and that of some German and French authority.

It was a lovely autumn day, and the gleams of the newly-risen sun fell on the still thick leafage of the trees, lighting up their glowing tints of russet, purple, crimson, orange and gold, with ruddy glow; glinting on the dew drops that hung sparkling like diamonds on every blade of grass as the breeze swept by, stirring them with gentle touch, while overhead arched a deep azure sky, flecked here and there with light, fleecy, gossamer-like clouds—a sky that was almost Italian in its blueness.

As we jogged along through the golden dawn, my companion, the driver, a Belgian and a merry grig, amused himself by singing snatches of national songs, in a curious, somewhat gutteral patosi, while I pulled steadily at a rather disreputable-looking meerschaum, and gazed persistently ahead to catch a glimpse of any fray that might be going on around Metz.

After driving steadily for about three hours we stopped by the roadside to rest and feed the horses, and also to recruit the inner man with a little light refreshment which we had brought with us. Rather more than an hour passed, then off we started again, and four hours later we arrived at the village of Villers-la-Montagne, where we were to pass the night. I put up at a quaint old-world little hostelry, the Croix d'Or, in the principal street, where I had some excellent potage, an omelet done as only a French cook can do them, and a bottle of good wine, old I knew from the cobwebs with which the glass was thickly encrusted. More than that I could not get. Provisions were scarce in the villages anywhere near Metz or in the vicinity of the investing army, for the Prussians made forced requisitions of the towns and villages within reach of their army, and left the unfortunate peaceably disposed French folk and the peasantry with woefully little to eat.

Still I was content, quite so, when I had my old friend the meerschaum once more between my lips and lounged in the low, dark doorway of mine inn, watching the western sun tinge all the heavens with his ruddy glow, and listening to the boom of the heavy guns that came across the valley, and told that the forts around Metz were throwing big shells at the enemy's lines, and it seemed strange to see young girls driving home the cows, old women spinning quietly at their doors, little children playing in the streets, and well grown lads and men lounging idly about, when the enemy, the hated Prussian was so near at hand. As I looked at the stalwart young Frenchmen, I could not but wonder why they were not in the army, helping to drive the invaders out of their country.

My reflections, however, were dispersed rather suddenly and rudely, by shouts, exclamations, and the clatter of horses' hoofs, and looking up in the direction from whence the noise came, I saw a German officer and some 30 or 40 Uhlans riding down the uneven, stony street at full tilt.

I guessed their errand at once. They had come on a forced requisition.

The troops pulled up a few yards from me, and the officer asked in tolerable French who was the chief man in the village? Half a dozen eager yet angry voices answered, and mine host of the Croix d'Or was fetched out, for it seemed that he was the most important personage then in Villers-la-Montagne.

As he went forward to his interview with the Germans, I saw his buxom wife, who was a Pole, and therefore of course hated the Prussians with a deadly hate, beckon to Jules, the cadaverous and ill-favored garcon of the inn, to come to her.

"How many horses have these miscreants left us?" she demanded in French, in low tones, meant only for her servant's ears.

"There are three in the stable at the present time, madam," he replied in the same tongue.

"Which are they?"

"Cerise, Loeson d'or, and Falette."

"Which is the swiftest of the three?" she queried.

"Falette, madam, is the youngest."

"How long would it take thee to reach Longwy on her?"

"Not long," he replied, a sudden light leaping in his dark eyes and burning there luridly, as he cast a murderous glance at the officer and his Uhlans outside conversing with his master. "She is fresh. She will go swiftly."

"Saddle her then," ordered the woman. "Steal out quietly. Thou knowest the shortest way to the fort. Do not spare Falette. They have plenty there for them," she concluded grimly, with a scarcely perceptible gesture toward the German soldiers.

"I understand," he replied, with a sardonic grin, "our friends, the Prussians, want supplies. Well, we will supply them liberally from—Longwy," and turning, he went out to the back of the premises, and presently I heard the stealthy tread of a man, and the louder ring of a horse's hoofs on the stones, a noise drowned by the hubbub without, and which did not reach the Uhlans' ears.

I was just a little mystified at this conversation between my hostess and the garcon, for I knew Longwy was a fort still in the possession of the French, and I wondered at the man's suggestion to supply their enemies from there. But, supposing that they wished to keep some food and forage in the village for themselves and were going to try and induce the soldiers at Longwy to let them have something they might give the requisitioning party, I did not give it another thought, but went out to see and hear what was going on between mine host of the Croix d'Or and the Prussian officer.

CHAPTER II.

He was a good-looking young fellow, sat his horse as though he was part of him, and his blue uniform, with its gay yellow facings, became him well, set off his broad shoulders and deep chest, and his peaked cap shaded a pair of frank blue eyes, keen as an eagle's. His men were a soldierly, likely-looking troop. Big, brawny fellows, with sunbrowned, determined faces, and that smart, capable look all the Prussians have.

He was interrogating Jules Deriveau, as I learned the landlord of the Croix d'Or was called, as to the different people likely to provide the food and forage he required.

"Corn?" he queried briefly.

"Simon le Coeur."

"Who else?"

"Paul Febre."

"Who else? Come, my man, out with it. Forage I have come for and forage I will have, so it is no use trying to conceal the names of those who have it to sell. Remember, we buy, we do not take your things without payment. You will receive the value of your grain when the war is over."

"Humph!" growled Deriveau, with a scowl at his interlocutor, looking as though he would like to fly at his throat. Nevertheless he rapped out a string of names, men likely to have what was wanted, for every man of the troop held his lance in hand ready to use it if necessary.

"Now bread?"

"Victor Stile, Jacques Rouvre."

"Hay?" And so on went the officer, and when he had a list of names, he reigned back his horse a little and shouted out: "Simon le Coeur."

The person to whom that name belonged shuffled out from the crowd of angry, gaping Frenchmen, and, being questioned, owned to possessing some corn, which he was briefly ordered to bring in bags at once. When he went off, Paul Febre was summoned, the Uhlan going through the list until, when he got to the last name, there was Simod le Coeur back once more before the Uhlan, with a big sack-like bag of corn in either hand.

"What do you value it at?" asked the officer. Simon named so many francs, the Prussian turned it into thalers, wrote it down in his notebook, tore out the leaf and gave it to Simon. This performance he repeated with each one who brought food or forage, until there was quite a goodly heap of bags and bundles lying in the road near them, as much as he and his Uhlans could carry off, and they began fastening the bags to their saddles, for the requisition had occupied a considerable time. While they were thus occupied a trooper who had been stationed to keep a lookout at that end of the village furthest away from Metz came galloping furiously along crying:

"The French are coming with field guns. Away! away!"

In the twinkling of an eye every Uhlan was in his saddle, the reins gathered up, going as hard as he could, one or two of the more daring snatching up a bag as they mounted; but the greater part of the requisitioned things were left in a heap by the roadside.

Away they tore, riding like fury, their horses' hoofs raising a perfect cloud of white dust, toward Metz, the young officer leading, urging his men on to ride as fast as they could. They were clear of Villers-la-Montagne, a turn of the road hid them from sight, when down the road from Longwy, two field pieces thundered each drawn by six horses, and manned by the full complement of men while several officers and more artillerymen rode alongside and behind, their blue uniforms looking indistinct and blurry in the waning light of the autumn day. They passed through the village like a flash of lightning; maddened with defeat, full of hatred and bitterness, they lusted for the blood of the invaders.

"The work will be warm," remarked Earle, a man who had come down from Arlon with the fourgons.

"Yes, we may be wanted," I suggested.

"True. Lancross (the doctor with us) had better bring some lint and splints," and giving some directions to one of the members of the society, he called out, "Come along, Vere," and began running like mad along the road leading to Metz, while I, seized with a sudden desire to see some of the horrors of war, began running, too.

When we got round the curve we could see the Uhlans in the distance going as hard as they could, for the road ran perfectly straight for a couple of miles, and the moon was riding up on the crest of a star-gemmed purple cloud, making it light as day, and nearer the French artillerymen, who had stopped and were hastily unharnessing the horses from the nine-pounders. They unlimbered the guns, swung them round, an officer calculated the distance, a gunner cut the fuse. There was a puff of white smoke, a boom. A shrapner 'shell went hurling through the air after the flying Prussians, burst, scattered. Four saddles were emptied, then one horse fell, while the other riderless steeds went galloping after their companions. The French, not to be cheated of a full revenge on their hated enemies, loaded and fired again. But we could not see if much mischief was done, the Uhlans had gone too far.

Then arose a lively discussion amongst the Frenchmen. Some were for going on and doing further damage, others recommended caution, saying the Prussians had now obtained too long a start to be hurt much, while to go on further would be unwise, as they might at any minute fall in with some of the Red Prince's army, who would avenge their comrades' fate terribly. So they remained there while the landlord of the Croix d'Or, the garcon, Lancross, myself and some others went on to where the Uhlans had fallen. Three lay still, one just near his horse, the fourth I saw move his hand as we came up. He was a mere youth, with a smooth, comely face, comely, even though the shadow of death was stealing across it, and close-cropped flaxen hair. I lifted him very gently, and pillowed the heavy hand on my shoulder, though the blood was gushing in streams from a terrible wound the shrapnel had torn in his back.

The languid eyes opened and gazed up at me for a moment. Such a look! Full of the most awful anguish and despair! Then a shiver ran through his whole frame, his eyes strained outwards as though they would burst from their sockets, a bloody foam rose to the lips that were vainly trying to shape some word, his form seemed to stretch out, he groaned terribly and then collapsed.

"Lancross," I cried quickly, "Come here. Can you do anything for this poor boy?"

The doctor came at once, and with one glance at the young ghastly face, exclaimed with professional brevity: "Nothing. He is dead." Nevertheless he unbuttoned the gaily-faced tunic and threw it open and the ensanguined shirt, crying as he did so: "My God! A woman!"

It was but too true.

One glance at the snowy throat and breast was enough to show me that the poor creature who had died in my arms a couple of minutes before was a woman.

I could not stay to see the body stripped and buried in the shallow hole, which the French peasants had dug by the wayside, where her companions were already lying, and, as I walked slowly back to Villers-la Montagne, I speculated endlessly as to what queer freak of fortune could have brought that poor girl into such a position, to meet such a fate.

Many were the curious and dreadful sights I saw while with the aid society in '70, but never one that impressed me so painfully as the death of that German maiden at Villers-la-Montagne.

The Prussians were not slow in profiting by the lesson taught them by the loss of their men, for on the next occasion that they made a forced requisition on a village in the neighborhood of Longwy, they compelled the whole of the inhabitants to come out and bivouac with them in a large open field until daybreak, so as to prevent anyone again stealing away to that fort and getting them treated to another taste of the qualities of their nine-pounders.—*Josephine Errol in Belgravia.*

LULLABIES FROM ALL LANDS.

DANISH.

Sleep, sleep, little mouse!
The field your father ploughs;
Your mother feeds pigs in the sty,
She'll come and slap you when you cry.

CHINESE.

Snail, snail, come out and be fed,
Put out your horns and then your head,
And thy mammy will give thee mutton,
For thou art doubly dear to me.

SPANISH.

The moon shines bright,
And the snake darts swift and light;
I see five baby bullocks
And a calf young and white.

ARABIC.

Sleep, my baby, sleep,
Sleep a slumber bare,
Sweetly rest till morning light,
My little farmer boy, so bright.

ZULU.

Hush, thee, my baby,
Thy mother's over the mountain gone,
There she will dig the little garden patch,
And water she'll fetch from the river.

NORWEGIAN.

Row, row to Baltnarock,
How many fish are caught in the net?
One for father and one for mother,
One for sister and one for brother.

SWEDISH.

Hush, hush, baby mine;
Pussy climbs the big green pine;
Mother turns the millstone,
Father to kill the pig has gone.

GERMAN.

Sleep, baby, sleep;
Thy father guards the sheep,
The mother shakes the dreamland tree,
And from it fall sweet dreams for thee;
Sleep, baby, sleep.

—*Rockaway Journal.*

TWO REMARKABLE RUNS.

Clever Scheme for Beating Depositors—A Game of Freeze Out.

From the New York Herald.

Speaking of the run on the Ulster County Savings institution recently, a prominent New York banker said: "We have nothing to-day that really compares with the runs during the panic of '57 and the wildcat banking days.

"I was a young man in business in Philadelphia," he added, "during the panic year, and I was exceedingly anxious about my small deposit when it was reported one morning that the bank in which I carried it was in danger.

"Early one morning information came to me that there was a run on the bank. I hurried to the scene and found the report to be true. I took my place on the long line and waited. The paying teller was deliberate, and it was several hours before I reached his window.

"When he paid me, instead of the coin that I requested he gave me the bank notes of a neighboring bank. I protested, but the man on the line behind me forced me aside and I was compelled to accept the money of a bank in which I had even less confidence than the one from which I had withdrawn the original amount.

"Hastening down the street, I found upon reaching the other institution that there was a sympathetic run there. Again I waited on a lengthy line of anxious depositors. When I reached the paying teller's window and asked for United States coin a handful of bills was thrust through the pigeon hole at me. 'I want coin,' I cried.

"Upon examining my money I found that this time it was nearly all the issue of a third Philadelphia bank, and, with grim determination, I resolved to ask for its redemption.

"I had no difficulty with a 'run' at this institution, and when I presented the notes for redemption in coin I certainly expected to receive it. Judge of my amazement, then, receiving in exchange bills of the bank from which I had first drawn my deposit earlier in the day.

"I learned afterward that the entire scheme had been arranged by the three banks. The messengers had lugged money from one institution to the other for the sole purpose of keeping men chasing around the town. There was no way of beating the dodge, and eventually I lost all my money by the bank's failure."

Continuing his narrative, the banker said: "There was one bank in Plainfield, N. J., that played with success a very neat game on its depositors at the time of a run.

"I happended to be in the town at the time. It was a bitter cold day in winter. The bank building was peculiarly constructed. A hallway lead from front to rear. On one side was the counting room with the pigeon-holes of the cashier, tellers and bookkeepers; on the other a blank wall. A lofty partition, rising to the ceiling composed of glass, with sliding window frames, formed the counting room side of the passageway.

"The bank officials got wind of the prospective run early in the day, and they prepared for it in a unique manner. They closed all the doors, allowing a free circulation of air. Near the rear door they fastened a fierce bulldug, attached to a chain 10 feet long.

"The thermometer registered below zero, the temperature of the passage way soon fell to the same point. Inside the counting room a cheerful fire burned in the fire place. The anxious depositors crowded in the cold passage way could see the blaze, but felt no warmth.

"They attempted to close the doors, but so great was the crowd that this was impossible in front of the building, and the bulldog near the rear door tugged at his chain and growled ominously at anyone who dared to approach him.

"Meanwhile the tellers worked slowly. They had laid in a vast supply of subsidary coins, cents and half cents and silver three and five cent pieces. Each depositor was made to take a proportion of these coins, and before it was paid over each piece was counted and recounted.

"To further aggravate the depositors the bank directors at the noon hour had a fine dinner spread in full sight of the men who were standing in the bitter cold without. The directors inside laughed and chatted pleasantly over their meal. The freezing, frightened, almost famished depositors on the line stamped their feet and swore fearful oaths, but without avail.

"Finally, many of them, choosing rather to risk their money than their lives, gave up the waiting in the piteous cold and returned to their homes.

"It was," said the banker, in conclusion, "the most unique way of stopping a run on a bank of which I have ever heard—it was, in fact, a regular freeze-out."

THEY BEAT THE LANDLORD.

The Long-Suffering Tenants at Last Got the Repairs They Wanted.

From the New York Herald.

There is in a certain uptown street an apartment house more or less pretentious as to exterior and comfortless as to interior, and of course you know what that means. It is scarcely necessary to say that the tenants lived in the old familiar state of incessant grievance. Knobs were off the doors, half the doors don't fit, some faucets would not turn and some ran all the time, gas jets refused to give light, boards were loose in the floor, there was no heat when the weather was cold, and little water at any time. But why particularize? Just say it was a characteristic, gaudy-fronted flat-house and you tell the whole story. Only this landlord, instead of coolly refusing to remedy the complaints, laughed in his tenants' face and shook his coin in his pocket and told them to depart for warmer climes.

Now the janitor in this house was a magnificent person, after the fashion of all janitors, but he had one failing—he would get drunk. One day last week some of the rude boys of the neighborhood got into the basement and stole a section of lead pipe and the lock off the basement door. As the house was in danger of being flooded, and Commissioner Gilroy's men were after him for wasting the croton, the landlord, with much protesting and complaining, was forced at last to do something. He ordered up a plumber and general repairer.

The tenants heard of this extraordinary proceeding and resolved to take advantage of it. The workmen were to come next day. So that night a committee of three visited the janitor with four bottles of whiskey and made the night with him, and the next morning he was drunker than a lord. When the workmen arrived it was a tenant who received them and showed them what was to be done.

Two or three days afterward, when they presented their bill to the landlord, he fell in a faint. Instead of one charge for repairing the lead pipe and another for the lock, there appeared items for repairing gas jets, for reducing doors to their proper size, for painting the bath-room floors, for repairing locks, faucets, floors and radiators from the top of the house to the bottom, and, horror of horrors! even for redecorating the front hall. For all this a modest total of nearly $500 was demanded, where the landlord did not expect to pay $50. He has not recovered from the shock yet, I understand, but the tenants do not care. The expression of peace and contentment they now wear is beautiful to behold, and also rare.

The Drummer's Little Game.

From the New York Commercial Advertiser.

"There you are, old man," said the gay young drummer, handing the aged trunk-hustler a cigar; "have a puff with me."

"No, thanks," sighed the baggageman, returning the proffered gift; "I don't smoke." And as the donor vanished into the hotel elevator the satchel-tosser sat him down upon a hamper and sighed again.

"It was another one of them Roman candles," he said in response to a query as to the reason of his grief; "I'm getting to know 'em by sight. About a year ago some fly drummer got a stingy fit and put up a scheme to save tips in hotels. Somebody steered him into a cigar factory where he could buy a box of Colorado Maduro ropes for a dollar a box, and he laid in a stock of 'em. When he went on the road he worked off the torches on everybody around the hotel instead of given them the usual dimes an' quarters. Since then the rest of the drummers have caught on to his act, and they all get their cigars in the same place. We used to take 'em on account of the wrapper, that made 'em look as if they was expensive, and their name, 'Favoritas de Emperadoes,' or somethin' like that. But we'er dead on to 'em now, and the drummer that springs any more 'Emperadoes' in this hotel gets boycotted. See?

Fathom is from the old Aryan root fat, to extend, and denotes the distance from tip to tip when the arms of an average-sized man are fully extended.

A RAINBOW VISION.

Written for the Standard.

The crashing thunder had rolled away, the driving, drenching rain had ceased, and the afternoon was vaporous and gray.

A woman looked at the sky and sighed at its dreariness; she watched wistfully for a gleam of blue, and was fast yielding to sadness and disappointment, when suddenly a golden arrow of sunshine pierced the clouds, and as by magic, a rainbow spanned the leaden world.

The lofty arch of beauty was remarkably brilliant and vivid. Whilst the woman gazed in ecstacy, another arch merged from the mist-twin rainbows of matchless color and symmetry.

She clasped her hands in wonder and joy, and whispered: "How beautiful! I wish they would always stay with us!"

Instantly there was a rift in the gray clouds, and on a shaft of silvery light stood a sylph with glittering wings.

Her floating robes were semi-transparent, of pearly, opalescent hues, and a dazzling coronet of diamonds, rested on her rippling golden hair. A smile flashed over the noble face, and her violet eyes shone with love and tenderness. She softly waved her shining wings and noiselessly flitted to the woman's side.

"So you wish for perpetual rainbows," she said: "I have heard that wish before, so thought I must visit you, and explain much that you cannot see, or understand."

"Mortals are restless, unsatisfied beings; you would soon weary of stationary rainbows and misty skies, and fret and crave for a change. All who worship at Nature's shrine love her for her infinite variety; but I must show you—let me touch you; then you can see."

The sylph pressed her white hands on the woman's eyes for a moment, and she then beheld a wondrous transformation.

She saw that the rainbows were composed of countless arches, of myriads of flowers. There were colossal curves of roses, shaded from deepest crimson to palest pink. Gigantic semi-circles of pansies, passion flowers and lilies in beautiful gradation of tints. Scarlet, gold, blue, amber, pearl—every earthly flower, from forests' wilds and florists' culture—were in these marvelous rainbows. The huge arches of green, were leaves of every gradation of color. Flowers and leaves were distinctly visible, the colors vividly bright; yet, strange to say, they were perfectly transparent.

(Were they the beautiful spirits of our faded flowers?)

The woman was entranced at the revelation and speechless with wonder and delight.

The sylph, with shining eyes, stood smiling by, and said: "Now you *know* that the Rainbow is ever with you—God's beautiful symbol of peace. Hereafter you will discern segments of this marvelous structure in every leaf and flower. This is a very prosaic, practical age, and I do not often reveal myself; but when I meet such a fervid adorer I rejoice! I am Iris! Farewell!"

The flower-like face, the graceful form, the opal tinted draperies, the glittering wings, all vanished in the gray mist. The rainbows faded away, but the woman still slumbered.

A man's cheerful voice awoke her, saying: "Here are some lovely chrysanthemums, I've brought you from the flower show."

"Oh, thank you!" she sleepily replied, as he placed them in her hands. "They are pretty fragments of the rainbow."

"Why, you are dreaming!" said the man, laughing heartily.—*S. V. Court, New York.*

EMPEROR WILLIAM'S REFORMS.

A Stamp Tax Upon Mistresses for the Benefit of the Servants.

From the New York Times.

An American woman who has been living for some months in a German family in Berlin saw the practical working of one of the young emperor's reforms. It dates back two or three years and smacks strongly of Bellamyism. Every servant keeps a little book, to which each week the mistress employing her must contribute a five-cent stamp provided by the government for that sole purpose. The book becomes a reference from one place to another, its record showing the periods of time spent in a place and time of being in service. In case of sickness or when age incapacitates a servant from duty, the government redeems the stamps contained in the book, whose contents are really a tax upon one class to assist in the maintenance of another less fortunate. The scheme is said to be regarded with favor on both sides, the employer as well as the employed.

Quill toothpicks came first of all from France. The largest factory in the world is near Paris, where there is an annual product of 20,000,000 quills.

THE OLD VAGRANT.

Weary and old, here let me die—
Here in this ditch, I care not how.
"He is drunk!" the passer-by may cry,
I do not want their pity now.
'Tis so, save when with shuddering glance
And scarce a pause, their sous they throw;
Why stop to lose the play, the dance?
Pass on, for I can die alone.

Yes, here to time I yield at last,
Since hunger can no longer kill.
I once did hope when youth was past,
My age some sheltered nook might fill,
But in no refuge was there room,
So many wretches houseless roam!
The streets through life have been my doom;
So, after all, I'll die at home.

When young, to those who earned their bread,
"Teach me your trade," I used to say;
"We scarce find work ourselves," they said;
"Go beg, my lad," and turned away.
Ye rich, who bade me work, nor saw
How hard I strove, ye gave, 'tis true,
My crust of bread, my couch of straw;
I dare not lay my curse on you.

I might have robbed—I begged instead:
The greatest theft I can recall
Was but an apple o'er my head
That overhung some garden wall.
Yet want has such an evil look
That into jail I oft was thrown;
The only wealth I had they took:
At least the sunshine was my own.

What country has the poor man? None.
How shared I in your corn and wine?
The battles by your soldiers won—
Your arts, your commerce were not mine.
Yet, when beneath the stranger's rule
The pride of France was crushed and low,
I wept! 'Twas like a thoughtless fool,
For rich and generous was the foe.

If we, indeed, mere vermin are,
'Twere wise to crush us ere we sting;
If men, O! teach us—wiser far—
How from our lives some good may spring.
Worm that I am, had human aid
Or guidance reached me, ever I
Might here have labored, loved and prayed,
Where now I leave my curse and die.

—*From the French of Beranger.*